

STUDIES IN BIBLE HISTORY.

BY J. ALLEN MILLER.

NUMBER II.

Lesson: 1. Blaikie's "Manual of Bible History." Chapters II-III. 2. Genesis chapters IV to XII. Outline:

I. THE FLOOD.

A. *The ante diluvian world.*—Here trace sin in effects to the time of the flood, noting the conduct of Cain. Contrast the lines of Cain and Seth. What evidence do you find in support of the common parentage of mankind? How do you account for the extraordinary length of life?

B. *Noah and the deluge.*—God's purpose and Noah's preparation. The entering into the ark. The flood—its universality, its duration, its subsidence. Leaving the ark. The sacrifice. God's covenant and its sign.

C. *Read the traditions* of the flood and compare with the Bible narrative.

D. Fix in your mind what the author says as to the *re-peopling* of the earth.

II. THE DISPERSION.

A. *Noah*,—his life; his relations with God; his occupation; his prophecy; his death. Study carefully the history of each of the sons of Noah and their descendants. Mark their progress, character, place of settlement and nations growing out of these settlements.

B. *Babel and the confusion of tongues.* Traditions in regard to the tower.

C. *Rise, progress, and civilizations* of the

1. Chaldean Empire.

2. The Egyptian Empire.

D. *Man's Religious Nature.* Trace the rise and spread of idolatry; polytheism. Note the result of idolatry upon the people.

NOTES.—In this lesson we meet with the earliest traditions relating to several cities and empires which in after years became so powerful. Nimrod was the founder of one of these kingdoms. The beginning of his kingdom was Babel. Gen. x, 10. Out of this land went Asshur (whence Assyria) and built Ninevah.

Babel, of which the Greek spelling is Babylon, was probably the scene of the "confounding" of tongues. The Hebrews at any rate connected the word with a Hebrew root (babel)

meaning "to confound." It was the capital of the country called in Genesis *Shinar* and in later records *Chaldea*.

The Babylonia and Assyrian empires in historical records are closely blended. They were sometimes united, sometimes distinct, each occupying territory watered by a mighty river—the Tigris in Assyria and the Euphrates in Babylonia. The large scope of land lying between the rivers—Mesopotamia, with Babylonia is the *Shinar* of Genesis.

With the record of Abel read Hebrews xi, 4. With the life of Cain remember his end. Jude 11. Compare the times of Noah and the present and read Matt. xxiv, 36-42, etc.

Mark the salvation of Noah and his family and read I Peter iii, 21.

Think of the *confusion* at Babel and picture if you can the *scene* contemplated in Revelation xvii, 15.

LEARNED IGNORANCE.

BY E. E. ROBERTS.

The heading was suggested after studying the Sunday school lesson for Sunday Jan. 27th, in the notes on which occurs this statement. "The bow was no doubt a familiar sight as it was the result of natural phenomena." Such stuff has the same effect on me as did the copious doses of castor oil, mother used to give me when as a child, I needed it. It makes me sick.

God's word says "I do set." How, I ask, in the name of common sense, could God say of a thing that had been in existence long enough to become familiar, to them. "I do set" if it had been there hundreds of years. Such a system of reasoning to poor, ignorant men like us is utterly incomprehensible. But learned ignorance is equal to the test, for says he the Bible must fit the teacher's science. And as it is a natural phenomena it certainly existed. Ergo the Bible is certainly wrong, for science can't be, (even though it did teach at one time that the earth was flat)—just as though there is any true science that is not in the Bible. Had they carefully read Gen. II, 3, 6 they would have found that "There went up a mist which watered the earth." As the Bible is not only the OLDEST but the ONLY history we have covering this part of the world's history, and as that gives no account of any rain, we have no right to suppose that it rained before the flood but have every just reason to think that it did not rain till the flood, but for argu-

ment sake we will grant you that it did frequently rain. Still there is no evidence that there was any rain bow; for three things are absolutely necessary to produce a bow: sun, rain and a dark back ground. And I challenge the learned-world to produce in a natural manner a bow with these three things. You may have the first or the last two or the first, and last but none of the combinations will make a bow and we have no right to suppose that these circumstances existed, it might, and indeed does often aim for weeks without any bow. Why? simply because these three things were not brought into conjunction. But we have no account in the Bible, and therefore no sensible reason for believing that it ever rained in torrents, anything like it did at the flood and has since. I might say it is necessary to do so, now that God's word may be true, and the bow be seen. For without these showers there would be no rain bow.

We have no difficulty in understanding the need of the bow after the flood, for should a cloud come up and begin to rain they would at once be terrified and fear another destruction; for Noah and his children would tell of the terrors of the last destruction, so God in his infinite pity and mercy gave this, an entirely new token to them and us, and still keeps it in the Heavens as a witness of his faithfulness, and the immutability of his word. But let us suppose that Learned Ignorance is right, and suppose we were a part of the ante-diluvian world, and God spoke to us as he did to Noah, would we not have said to him, why! God we have seen the bow all our lives, and how will we know that you will do as you say? Would we not? I think so.

The attempt of Learned Ignorance reminds me of the colonel of one of the regiments that went from the old Keystone state, to do battle for the flag in the late war. They had for color bearer a brave son of the Emerald Isles, who was justly noted for his daring bravery in first placing his flag on more than one of the enemy's breast works. In one of the assaults on the enemy, he as usual was far in the advance of all the rest. The colonel seeing that there was danger of his capture and the loss of their colors shouted, "Come back, you fool, with that flag, you'll lose it." But the brave boy shouted, "bring on your soldiers; this flag never goes backwards." Learned Ignorance may shout to us bring back the Bible to science, but brother let you and I, though we be only a corporal's guard, shout to such, "bring up your science, the Bible never goes backward."